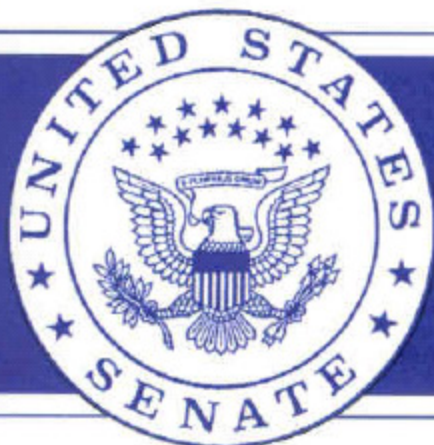


U.S. SENATOR JACK REED



TRIP REPORT



PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, AND IRAQ

BY SENATOR JACK REED

OCTOBER 3-9, 2006

IRAQ TRIP REPORT

U.S. Senator Jack Reed

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From October 2 through October 9, 2006, I conducted my ninth visit to Iraq and my fourth visit to Afghanistan. I was accompanied by Senator Dick Durbin of Illinois. Our trip began with a one-day visit to Islamabad, Pakistan. In Afghanistan we visited Kabul and Ghazni. In Iraq we visited Fallujah, Baghdad, and Tikrit.

Pakistan

Pakistan plays a critical role in the efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. Indeed, some would say it plays the most critical role. Prior to September 11th, the government of Pakistan and in particular its Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI), were significant supporters of the Taliban. The success of Operation Enduring Freedom had the effect of forcing survivors of the Taliban regime and leadership elements of Al Qaeda to flee to Pakistan, particularly to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), a region between the borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan which for centuries has been controlled by tribal elements, with no central government or military presence.

The continued presence of Al Qaeda leadership and Taliban elements within Pakistan raises the question of whether there is implicit or explicit toleration that amounts to a “sanctuary.” This issue of toleration was recently underscored by the agreement between the Government of Pakistan and tribal leaders within North Waziristan in the FATA. Since our clear national policy is to seek out and destroy Al Qaeda and associated elements wherever they are, we cannot accept a policy of toleration by the government of Pakistan. The proof of President Musharraf’s commitment and the reliability of the ISI will be a more aggressive approach to disrupting the Taliban in Pakistan, securing the border with Afghanistan and applying more pressure on the surviving Al Qaeda leadership.

The presence of madrassahs and the lack of adequate public education constitute one of the most significant challenges not only to Pakistan but also to the region. Ultimately, the “War on Terror” is a war of ideas. As long as madrassahs flourish as a source of radical indoctrination, we will face succeeding waves of potential “martyrs.” As a counterweight to the madrassahs, Pakistan and other regional governments must improve and expand public education and effectively regulate the madrassahs. Often, the initial appeal of the madrassahs is not an exclusively religious impulse by families, but by economic necessity. The ample funding of madrassahs and their proselytizing objectives combine to enable them to provide instruction and board to poor children who would otherwise be deprived of any education.

Afghanistan

When we first arrived in Afghanistan, we attended the Transfer of Authority Ceremony where NATO’s International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) assumed command from Coalition forces in eastern Afghanistan, completing a process that began with the establishment of ISAF in Kabul in August 2002.

While this was a positive step proving the commitment of the international community to the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan, and it will certainly relieve strain upon U.S. forces, there are concerns. First, President Karzai remains concerned that the takeover by ISAF signals the departure of United States forces. President Karzai must be reassured that this is not the case. Second, NATO forces remain inadequate at a time when the Taliban is regaining strength. NATO must provide the forces, leadership, and equipment necessary to win the fight.

The Afghan National Army is making progress. More individuals are applying than can be accepted and the applicants are of good quality. Necessary schools and a military justice system have been established. The Army has progressed from watching Coalition forces work to taking the lead in operations. Both Coalition and Afghan military and civilian leaders agree that the Afghan National Army needs to be better equipped.

The Afghan police force and civilian justice sector still suffer from poor leadership and corruption. The police force is years from full capacity and in some areas the population consider them a bigger problem than the Taliban. Efforts must be stepped up to reform the police force, which is the long term solution to security and stability.

President Karzai remains the “indispensable man” with no one waiting in the wings. He has a reputation for honesty but he is battling a culture of corruption and believes that any wrong move could be destabilizing. He is presently having a difficult time because state-building is not one of his strengths and his immediate circle of advisors lived out of the country for many years, but he is improving. The United States must continue to support him and his efforts to build a government.

There are several projects which have the potential to achieve great success in winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. First is a national roads campaign. As Lieutenant General Eikenberry, Commanding General, Combined Forces Command Afghanistan says, “Where the roads end, the Taliban begins.” Roads are crucial to bringing the government in the form of security and services to the farthest reaches of the country, and to allow people to trade, thus rebuilding the economy.

Second is a program called *Afghan First* which encourages the United States government and private international companies to give contracts and jobs to Afghans, thus improving their skills, increasing entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for Afghan economic expansion. Among the services being considered for *Afghan First* are food, fuel supplies, field services, equipment maintenance and interpreters.

The third important effort involves Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). PRTs have been established in each of the provinces of Afghanistan. The PRT mandate is to extend the legitimacy and reach of the central government throughout the country using diplomacy, development and defense. From the briefings I received, the Afghan PRTs have developed many practical projects which are making a real difference.

The road campaign, the PRTs and *Afghan First* are non-military, high impact, low cost programs to bring economic revival and governance to Afghanistan, thus taking a major step to winning the war on terror. However, these programs lack sufficient funding and support from the U.S. government. Funding is insufficient for road construction. Contracting rules and regulations, particularly those of the Department of Defense, make it difficult to implement *Afghan First*. PRTs remain woefully understaffed and committed, hardworking PRT members, some of whom are on their second tour, are not adequately supported by their civilian agencies.

LtGen Eikenberry remains optimistic that we can win the fight in Afghanistan, but he notes it will take “more time, casualties and national treasure.” Ninety percent of Afghanistan was under the control of the Taliban in 2001 and that sanctuary is now gone. However, the Taliban has had the opportunity to strengthen as a result of weak governance in Afghanistan, insufficient coalition forces to oppose them, insufficient reconstruction in Afghanistan, and sanctuary in Pakistan which has allowed their command and control to improve. Taliban and al Qaeda fighters continue to receive funding from the drug trade, Pakistani businessmen and individuals in Saudi Arabia. The militants remain bold and tenacious, and LtGen Eikenberry believes the toughest fighting to date will take place in the spring of 2007.

Iraq

Ongoing violence remains a major concern. There are two major sources of violence: the insurgency and sectarian violence. Al Anbar Province is the epicenter of the Sunni insurgency and one of the most violent areas in Iraq. The Marines and Army forces continue to conduct active campaigns particularly in and around Ramadi. The presence of American forces significantly reduces insurgent activity, but the lasting effect of these operations is uncertain as the insurgents have demonstrated the ability to reconstitute their forces and sustain their operations. More troubling is the sectarian violence, between Shia and Sunnis, that is engulfing the rest of the country, particularly Baghdad. Most military commanders we spoke with said that the Iraqi people seem to have a high threshold for this violence and the Iraqi Minister of the Interior said he did not believe the prerequisites for civil war were present. However, the level of violence makes it increasingly difficult for Coalition forces to perform their mission and it certainly affects the support of the American people for the present U.S. policy in Iraq.

Compounding concern about sectarian violence is the inability or unwillingness of the Iraqi government to stop it. Iraqi leaders do not condemn all sectarian activities. Prime Minister Maliki announced a reconciliation plan but has not provided further details. There is little real effort to bring Sunnis into the government. There is no concerted effort to demobilize the militias and, if such an effort were undertaken, there is concern there is insufficient capacity to demobilize, provide vocational training, and absorb individuals into the Army or civilian life. Furthermore, the Iraqi government has prohibited Coalition forces from taking steps to decrease violence, like clearing Sadr City of those instigating violence. Without the resolve of Iraqi civilian and religious leaders to truly stop sectarian violence, U.S. stabilization efforts are ultimately futile.

All military commanders we met with agreed that the Iraqi Army continues to make progress in ability and willingness to engage in combat operations. One year ago, the Iraqi Army's first instinct was to call on the U.S. to solve any problem, but now they solve many problems by themselves. The major development when we were there was the return of 1,700 soldiers who had deserted several months before due to continuing problems with pay and life support. The U.S. military can help train soldiers who can fight effectively, but if they are not paid, fed, housed, and provided with adequate equipment, they will not remain in the Army. Improved governmental capacity is essential.

Major General Mixon, Commander of the 25th Infantry Division and Task Force Lightning, stated that the next six months will determine if the U.S. strategy in Iraq is working. He stated the issue as "Can Iraqi forces, with little coalition help, provide a moderate level of security." He said that there will simply always be violence, but that violence was acceptable if the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) remained engaged. He summed up by saying, "If next summer we need to have major forces in the field, we have not succeeded." Lieutenant General Dempsey, Commanding General, Multi-National Security Transition Command, sees 2007 as a sustainment year and by the end of 2007, he thinks U.S. forces should be in the background. He stated that as the Iraqis show increasing responsibility, the U.S. needs to get out of the way and reduce numbers.

Like in Afghanistan, progress with the police lags far behind the progress of the Army. LtGen Dempsey believes that in most places, the local police are net contributors to security. The major exception is al Anbar province. Again, as in Afghanistan, the major issue with the National Police is that they were not newly created. Former interim Prime Minister Allawi grew them for the elections and it was not done well. In order to change the police, a four phase reform is being proposed: assess the leadership and purge the ranks, develop the remaining leadership, retrain the rest of the ranks, and move approximately half of the police force outside of Baghdad. Also, Police Transition Teams (PITTs) have been increased so that there is one in every police station in Baghdad

The lack of sufficient funding for reconstruction is also critical. The United Nations estimates that the reconstruction of Iraq's infrastructure will cost \$60 billion. Presently there are no international donors for this effort. The U.S. provided \$18 billion through the Iraqi Reconstruction Fund, but \$8 billion was used for security, \$2 billion was used for fuel and therefore \$8 billion remained. This funding has been used but did not accomplish even a small amount of what needed to be done. Furthermore, there is evidence that much of these funds were wasted. Iraq also has approximately \$13 billion in the bank from oil revenues but despite the crisis in reconstruction, there seems to be no contracting ability or willingness to ensure these oil revenues are used to meet the residents' needs. Again, without economic revival, the military efforts are in vain. As I have written and stated before, the Administration's strategy of "clear, hold and build" remains "clear, hold and wait." Until levels of funding and personnel for reconstruction match military might, we cannot succeed.

We met with two PRTs while in Iraq, one in Baghdad, and one in Salad-ad-Din. Both are working very hard to accomplish Herculean tasks. As the leader of the Baghdad PRT stated, the goal is to make the provincial government self reliant like coalition forces are making the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) self reliant. But again, the civilian effort is not being treated in the same way as the military effort. Last year, top Administration officials heralded PRTs as the centerpiece of the U.S. reconstruction effort. Yet over a year later, most PRTs have not even been established and all are undermanned, including the Baghdad PRT which is given priority on resources. This Administration continually fails to follow words with deeds. A few dedicated PRT team members are struggling to accomplish an enormous amount with a shocking lack of human and financial resources. This Administration simply must address this issue immediately or risk losing all the military has accomplished.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Pakistan

- Continue to urge President Musharraf to police the FATA, capturing Al Qaeda and Taliban members.
- Department of Defense funds should be provided to train and equip the Frontier Corps, made up of forces indigeneous to the FATA, who are positioned to be on the frontlines of battles in that region.
- Continue to urge President Musharraf to reform the madrassahs.
- Provide new emphasis and increased resource for the USAID's program to create public schools, providing an alternative to madrassahs. Ensure that this program reaches into the frontier areas and that the schools provide housing and meals, which draws many of the poor to send their children to maddrassahs.

Afghanistan

- The U.S. should insist that NATO provide the promised forces and necessary reinforcements to ISAF.
- The Administration should provide USAID with \$1 billion per year for the next five years to be used on reconstruction.
- Roads are critical to our success in Afghanistan. Over the next five years, USAID and the Army Corps of Engineers will need \$2.373 billion to complete Afghanistan's road network.
- Accommodation of U.S. contracting regulations in DOD and civilian agencies should be made to promote *Afghan First* in order to accelerate the acceptance and investment of the Afghan people in a central government rather than the Taliban.

- The Afghan Army should be provided with better equipment, including better weapons, vehicles and communications equipment.
- Efforts must be stepped up to reform the police force, which is the long term solution to security and stability.
- U.S. civilian agencies simply must be provided with the funding and incentives to fully staff PRTs. Separate line items for positions and funding for those positions should be included in the budgets of the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce and Justice.

Iraq

- The government of Iraq must be encouraged to take tangible political steps, including:
 - Condemn sectarian violence
 - Disband the militias
 - Allow coalition forces full access to all areas of Baghdad in order to accomplish their missions
 - Move forward on necessary constitutional changes to create a more inclusive government
 - Accelerate the timetables for provincial elections
 - Improve intelligence sharing with Coalition forces.
 - Complete the two proposed Foreign Military Sales agreements with the United States
 - Continue the Prime Minister's Iraqi Army Growth Initiative so that the Iraqi Government recruits, trains and sustains an additional 100,000 Iraqi soldiers with Iraqi funding.
- President Bush should appoint a special envoy, who reports directly to President Bush, to work full-time with the Iraqi government to help the achieve the steps necessary to create a stable, peaceful, united Iraq.
- Undertake real reconstruction. The Administration should ensure that sufficient funding is available for reconstruction of the infrastructure and economic revival. The Administration should again seek commitment and funds from the international community. The Administration should also encourage the Iraqi government to apply the \$13 billion in the bank from oil proceeds to the needs of its citizens. Finally, the Administration should consider what additional funding for reconstruction can be included in future U.S. budgets.
- Accelerate efforts to improve Iraqi governmental capacity. Ministerial capacity to provide life support to the Iraqi Army and basic service to Iraqi citizens is abysmal. On the other hand, the U.S. has a large number of professional civil servants and financial and management experts. The Administration must harness this expertise, offering funding and incentives, to ensure that adequate numbers of personnel are in Iraq, helping to build governmental capacity, thus

improving the lives of Iraqi citizens which will enable them to invest in their government and lower violence.

OBSERVATIONS & DISCUSSIONS

PAKISTAN

Visit with United States Ambassador to Pakistan, Ryan Crocker

We had the opportunity to visit with Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who ably represents the United States in Pakistan.

In our discussions, President Musharraf was recognized for his vision, but the overall implementation of policy by his government has been poor. One of the most pressing issues is the continuing role of madrassahs in the educational sector of Pakistan. These religious schools, often funded by radical Islamists outside of Pakistan, are more often a source of indoctrination into radical Islamic politics than education. President Musharraf has made several public statements that these madrassahs must be brought under governmental control and the number of foreign students sharply curtailed (The presence of significant numbers of foreign students raises the specter that these madrassahs are preparing young ideologues that will take their training back to their homelands to contribute to a radical Islamist presence). Although some progress has been made to register these madrassahs, reform their curricula, and the limit foreign students, much more must be done.

The presence of madrassahs and the lack of adequate public education constitute one of the most significant challenges not only to Pakistan but also to the region. Ultimately, the “War on Terror” is a war of ideas. As long as madrassahs flourish as a source of radical indoctrination, we will face succeeding waves of potential “martyrs.” As a counterpoint, Pakistan and other regional governments must improve and expand public education. Often, the initial appeal of the madrassahs is not an exclusively religious impulse by families, but one of economic necessity. The ample funding of madrassahs and their proselytizing objectives combine to enable them to provide instruction and board to poor children who would otherwise be deprived of any education.

Recognition of the importance of the reform and reinvigoration of the public education system is reflected in the fact that helping to create public schools is the centerpiece of USAID activities in Pakistan. Within the government of Pakistan, the current Minister of Education is opposed to the radical Islamification of the education system. He has initiated a thorough review of the curriculum, but a detailed implementation of changes is still lagging.

Related to the issue of curriculum are the condition of the physical infrastructure and the adequacy of instructional staff. Since the 1970’s, Pakistan has seen a progressive deterioration of services and facilities. This vast deterioration does not lend itself easily to a “jump start.”

Although educational reform is touted by President Musharraf and is the “centerpiece” of our efforts, it seems to be an area long on rhetoric and short on resources. The future stability of Pakistan and its ability to play a positive role in the region cries out for much more attention to this issue.

In our meeting, we discussed the role of the Pakistani ISI and, in particular, whether ISI had mixed loyalties. Prior to September 11, the government of Pakistan and in particular the ISI, were significant supporters of the Taliban. Despite President Musharraf’s strong commitment after September 11 to U.S. efforts to destroy Al Qaeda and to stabilize Afghanistan, there are still lingering suspicions that individuals within ISI retain supportive ties to the Taliban. Since September 11, President Musharraf has been placing individuals in key positions within ISI who are loyal to him. All of the Major Generals and some of the Brigadiers are his selections. Nevertheless, it is evident that, certainly before September 11, the Taliban in Afghanistan was in many respects a creature and client of elements within ISI. And, because the Taliban sponsored and protected Al Qaeda, it appears that ISI had some relationship with individuals associated with Al Qaeda. In that era, the struggle against the Soviets presented an opportunity and a need for ISI to mobilize opposition and one of the major tools of this mobilization was an appeal to Islamic radicalism.

Today, although the ISI is being rebuilt, there are still individuals who remain from prior to September 11 and whose loyalties are uncertain. Overall, Ambassador Crocker believes the current ISI is basically a credible agency of the Pakistani government. The proof, however, will be a more aggressive approach to disrupting the Taliban in Pakistan, securing the border with Afghanistan, and applying more pressure on the surviving Al Qaeda leadership.

The recent agreement with tribal leaders in North Waziristan raises anew the question of whether the government of Pakistan is committed to this aggressive posture. President Musharraf maintains that the arrangement is an agreement with tribal leaders in North Waziristan and not with the Taliban or foreign fighters. The accuracy of this assessment will be tested on the ground.

At the urging of the U.S. after September 11, the Pakistan Army undertook significant military operations in North Waziristan and other border provinces in the FATA. Prior to these recent military operations, the government had no real police or military presence in the FATA. However, the Pakistani Army did not fare well in these engagements. In probing the motivation for the agreement with North Waziristan, one possible explanation was simply to save the Army from continuing heavy losses and allow them to withdraw without losing face. The Ambassador acknowledged that the Army had suffered significant casualties and the effect of the agreement is to cause their withdrawal from interior checkpoints to the borders of the region. In place of the Army, the Frontier Corps will have responsibilities within the region. The Frontier Corps is essentially a local militia without significant training. President Musharraf wants to increase their training, but aspiration and implementation are two different things. The President

maintains that he does want to secure the border with Afghanistan, but it is not clear whether this is a priority. The President cites the Taliban as a significant threat because it has attacked tribal leaders and Pakistani soldiers, and they are threatening to push outside the tribal areas into other parts of Pakistan.

The emerging responsibilities of the tribal leaders and the Frontier Corps are to police the three basic elements of the agreement: (1) eliminate the presence of foreign fighters in North Waziristan, (2) seal the border with Afghanistan, and (3) prevent “Talibanization” within the region and any spillover to other parts of Pakistan. These are formidable responsibilities. One would be remiss if he did not ask how the tribal leaders and the Frontier Corps could accomplish these objectives when the Pakistani Army was unsuccessful. President Musharraf would respond that the “hammer only” approach was inadequate and the government must engage the population and bring them to the side of the government. Again, the concept might have promise, but the execution is daunting. Moreover, there is emerging evidence that the leadership of the tribes has been systematically targeted by the Taliban and foreign fighters reducing the key leaders necessary to carry out this policy.

As a final point, we touched on the presence of Afghani refugee camps in the tribal areas and elsewhere. These camps present significant problems. They are many respects ungoverned by the government of Pakistan. They provide the ability of the Taliban to organize and recruit for their efforts against Afghanistan. The United States is pushing both Pakistan and Afghanistan to close these camps. Such a closure is unlikely to occur this winter, but it is hoped that these closures can be accomplished by next spring.

Meeting with Vice Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan

We had the opportunity to meet with General Ahsan Saleem Hyat, Vice Chief of the Army Staff of Pakistan. General Hyat is a close ally of President Musharraf and second ranking member of the Army of Pakistan (President Musharraf retains his position as head of the Pakistani Army; a position he agreed to relinquish as he continued to serve as President, but to date, has failed to do so).

General Hyat began his remarks with a long discussion of the history behind the current struggle with the Taliban. He noted that the term, “Taliban” derived from the word for “student.” The Taliban drew its strength from madrassahs that were sponsored by radical Islamists. In the wake of the Soviet departure, the Taliban fought against other Afghani forces, including Massoud and his Northern Alliance. Eventually, the Taliban secured control and established a government that was recognized by Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

He pointed out the ethnic complexity of communities within Pakistan and Afghanistan and the overlap of these communities across national boundaries. The Taliban are Pashtun with a tribal presence on both sides of the border, especially in the FATA. General Hyat indicated that not all Pashtun are Taliban, but all Taliban are Pashtun. Since the creation of Pakistan in 1947, the Army remained outside of the FATA.

However, three years ago, at the urging of the United States, the Army entered the FATA to pursue “terrorists.” In the ensuing battles, both sides have suffered significant casualties.

Last May and June, a reevaluation of the strategy within the FATA began. General Hyat pointed out a fundamental premise of counterinsurgency warfare; military efforts cannot resolve the issue alone in the face of poverty, illiteracy, and ideology. This premise was influential in shaping the current policy.

General Hyat outlined the three elements that are essential for the success of the new policy. First, there must be no cross border activity into Afghanistan. Second, there must be no spread of radicalism within Pakistan. And, third, there must be an improvement in the quality of life of the people within the tribal areas. He conceded that some people resent this agreement, but there are a fair number of supporters including some of the militants that have been resisting the Army. He admitted that the situation will not improve immediately.

We noted that there appears to be a significant upswing in attacks both across the border and within the region since the agreement was announced. Given that, we asked how long he would wait before questioning the efficacy of the agreement. He responded, without indicating any sense of time, that a significantly higher rate of attacks will be unacceptable.

We also asked how he screens extremists from entering the ranks of the security services. General Hyat acknowledged that this is an issue that bears attention. He estimated that thirty percent of the Army comes from the FATA. Eighty percent of the Frontier Corps is from the FATA. He further pointed out that individuals within the Army and the Air Force were involved in one of the attempted assassinations of President Musharraf. However, he indicated that senior officers regularly talk to their troops. He described the Army of Pakistan as a family where the battalion is everything. Sons follow fathers to enlist in the same battalion and a number serve together.

General Hyat also offered his view that the madrassahs play a generally useful role. They take children from poor circumstances and provide them both instruction and sustenance. He recognizes that there are some excesses, but he stressed that reforms are underway regarding the regulation of these madrassahs and the inclusion of more secular subjects in their curricula.

General Hyat indicated that the United States will complete an assessment of the equipment of the Frontier Corps in the next thirty days. This is part of an overall evaluation of their capabilities as a baseline. He stressed that technology and equipment might be less critical than the number of “boots on the ground” when it comes to the mission of the Frontier Corps.

Country Team Brief

We had the opportunity to have a working lunch with key members of the Country Team.

Senator Durbin asked the Ambassador and his colleagues to look ahead five years with regard to Pakistan. The Ambassador indicated that we will need Pakistan as a strategic partner. In the past, we have had an uneven relationship with Pakistan, veering from being allies to imposing sanctions against them. He reminded us of the multi-year saga of the sale of F16s that were ordered before sanctions were imposed and then languished during the period of sanctions. This episode still rankles the Pakistanis. They have recently completed a deal to buy new F16s and to upgrade existing models, but they still are concerned with the long-term commitment of the United States.

Without the Pakistanis, our efforts in the War on Terror will be inhibited. Their active support will not guarantee success, but, without them, our task will be extremely difficult.

The Ambassador also pointed out that the Pakistani economy is doing reasonably well. Despite the earthquake, it has seen a 6% growth rate.

The topic of the relationship between Pakistan and India was raised. It was pointed out that India is suspicious of the role of ISI in recent bombings in India. The bombings revealed a sophistication that suggested outside assistance rather than the actions of homegrown terrorists.

On the diplomatic front, both countries seem to be “de-linking” their relationship with the United States. For example, the Indians did not demonstrate much of a reaction to the recent F-16 sale to Pakistan. And, the Pakistanis did not register a strong reaction to the pending nuclear deal between the United States and India.

Recognizing the continuing importance of Pakistan and the substantial nature and expense of the numerous challenges facing Pakistan, we asked how we can continue to support these efforts over time. It was readily acknowledged that the United States alone cannot bear the burden. But, we have a role to play as a catalyst for Pakistani efforts and to rally the support of the international community. We naturally want credit for our efforts like earthquake relief. However, the real mark of success a decade from now will be the extent that the people of Pakistan are invested in their government and see it as an effective agent for their welfare.

The Ambassador also made the point that he persistently and unequivocally makes it clear that displeasure with American policy in other areas of the world is no excuse for terrorist activity or any let-up in the suppression of terrorists. The Pakistani media maintains a constant chorus of complaint about Lebanon and the Palestinian Authority. In addition, they use these incidents as a club to attack Musharraf’s support of the United States.

We discussed the relationship of Pakistan with China. Their long-time relationship is based, in large part, by sharing an historic rivalry with India. Despite the longevity of the relationship, it has not produced great benefits for Pakistan. Today, Pakistan and China are commercial competitors in some areas, particularly textiles.

We asked about up-coming elections in Pakistan. The Ambassador and his colleagues indicated that the national elections for President will likely be held in fall 2007 or spring 2008. Musharraf's party is confident that they can win fair and free elections, but they are not sitting idly. They are moving resources into their base in the Punjab to lay the groundwork for the campaign.

There are two opposition parties. Both are centered around the personality and political ambitions of their leaders. Interestingly, both leaders are in exile outside of Pakistan. These parties feel that the United States should step-in and help them as a means of ensuring a more vital democratic process. Historically, democracy in Pakistan has been the brief exception rather than the rule. No elected assembly has survived for its entire term of office.

The United States realizes that it has a great deal riding on free and fair elections in Pakistan. The Administration's mantra that democracy is on the march will have a rude and contradictory shock if our ally, Pakistan, is unable or unwilling to conduct free and fair elections. Consequently, we are committing \$50 to \$60 million into training election workers and to reforming the registration process.

Pakistan's education system has improved but is still poor. In the 1980s, literacy was 30%, and now it is 50%. However, every other country in the region has invested more in its educational system. When I asked if a countrywide assessment had been done, we were told that USAID had not done a national assessment and that the World Bank had focused solely on Punjab. One hundred sixty million people need a viable school system. Madrassahs are more important in some areas like the frontier. If a family can only afford to educate one child, it is usually the oldest male. The rest of the children are educated by the mother (which, the embassy noted should argue for educating the girls, but it does not).

In the area of health, the U.S. focus is on mothers and children. There are adequate physical facilities but a lack of personnel. The nurses trained in Pakistan are trained to Western standards, which are not appreciated in the country, so they emigrate.

Briefing by the Office of the United States Defense Representative

After lunch we met with the staff of the Office of the United States Defense Representative, whose mission is to shape the Pakistan-United States dialogue through the development of a long term relationship with the U.S., enhance the performance of, and coordination with, the Pakistani military and civil armed forces in the Global War on Terror, and to cultivate Pakistan-U.S. military interoperability.

The continuing concern of the Defense Representative Office is that everything in Pakistan is seen through the scope of India. In addition, Pakistani feels, based on history, that the United States always deserts them.

We discussed the FATA and recent agreement with North Waziristan. They explained that the FATA includes areas besides North Waziristan, such as Bajaur, Mohmand, Kyber, Orakzai, Kurram, and South Waziristan. None of these areas have ever been under control of a central government and the Taliban and foreign fighters have run rampant, overwhelming the tribal leaders there.

The goal of the counterinsurgency in the FATA is to capture or kill Al Qaeda elements and Taliban elements, isolate the Pashtun who cooperate with Al Qaeda and Taliban, and deny sanctuary to militants.

Pakistan is taking a three tiered approach to the FATA:

- 1) Establish a federal presence using Pakistani military and improve security
- 2) Negotiate with tribal leaders and build support for the government
- 3) Improve infrastructure and services

The approach has not been successful to date. There has been fierce resistance. The question remains if Pakistan is sincere about gaining control of the FATA and if their lack of success is the result of capability or intent.

On September 5, 2006, Pakistan signed a peace accord with the major tribes of North Waziristan. Under this agreement, the tribes are now responsible for controlling the cross border movement of foreigners and stopping attacks in Afghanistan that start in the FATA. There is also an agreement not to attack the Pakistani military. In return, the Army has vacated the interior checkpoints where their presence was causing tension and moved to the border. The Defense Representative Office believes Pakistan signed this peace accord because the military strategy was not succeeding by itself. The view of the Defense Representative is that the agreement will reduce attacks on the Pakistani military, but it will not eliminate Al Qaeda/Taliban.

The U.S.-Pakistani military relationship is slowly being rebuilt after the U.S. imposed a series of punitive measures, including sanctions, with the fall of the Soviet Union and start of Pakistan's nuclear activity. The U.S. also cut off International Military Education and Training (IMET), resulting in a whole generation of Pakistani majors and colonels who are wary of the United States. The Defense Representative's Office also noted the continuing negative impact of denying Pakistan the F-16s it had purchased in the 1990s. In the most recent sale, Pakistan demanded guarantees.

From 1989 to 2001 there was no Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to Pakistan. FMF began again in FY02 with \$75 million, FY03 with \$224.5 million, and FY04 with \$75 million. The plan is to provide Pakistan with \$300 million per year from 2005-2009. This will make the Pakistani FMF program the third largest after Israel and Afghanistan.

Twenty nations receive Coalition Support Funds which provide funding for the costs of fighting the War on Terror. Pakistan is reimbursed for food, fuel, clothing, ammunition, billeting, and medication expenses. The Joint Staff recently met with Pakistan to renew this program. Pakistan does complain that reimbursement is too slow.

The Defense Representative Office recommends changing the Coalition Support Fund program to paying for specific objectives that are planned and executed, rather than simply paying what the country bills.

Under the FY06 Defense Authorization bill, the Defense Department has new authority to provide military aid to foreign countries. The provision allowed regional combatant commanders to spend a worldwide total of \$200 million on equipment, training and services for other nations' militaries. These "Section 1206" funds are a relatively low cost expense to the United States but have a high impact. In FY06, Pakistan received \$25 million that was used for spare parts. The Defense Representative Office would like to receive additional funding in FY07 to use for the training and equipping of the Frontier Corps.

AFGHANISTAN

ISAF Transfer of Authority Ceremony

When we first arrived in Afghanistan, we attended the Transfer of Authority Ceremony where NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) assumed command from Coalition forces in eastern Afghanistan, completing a process that began with the establishment of ISAF in Kabul in August 2002.

While this was a positive step proving the commitment of the international community to the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan, and it will certainly relieve strain on U.S. forces, there are concerns. First, President Karzai remains concerned that the takeover by ISAF signals the departure of United States forces. President Karzai must be reassured that this is not the case. Second, NATO forces remain inadequate at a time when the Taliban is regaining strength. At the time we visited, only 85% of the authorized force was in place and there was no procedure for replacing casualties. NATO must provide the forces, leadership, and equipment necessary to win the fight.

Lunch Briefing by U.S. Military Leaders

We had the opportunity to have a working lunch with Lieutenant General Karl Eikenberry, Commanding General, Combined Forces Command Afghanistan, Major General Robert Durbin, Commander, Combined Security Transition Command, Major General Lloyd J. Freakley, Commander, 10th Mountain Division, and Brigadier General William Chambers, Deputy Commanding General, Combined Forces Command Afghanistan. Richard Norland, Charge' d'Affairs of U.S. Embassy to Afghanistan, and other military personnel also attended.

The Afghanistan National Army (ANA) is making progress. More individuals are applying than the Army can accept. The applicants are of good quality and the Afghan selection process has improved. LTG Eikenberry noted that if there was one thing he underestimated, it was the lack of human capital. In building an Army, the Coalition must overcome a country which is the 4th poorest in the world, has a 20% literacy rate, and has just come through thirty years of war which instilled hate and fear in many.

Still, MG Freakley noted progress. He explained that in Operation Mountain Lion in April, the ANA watched while the Coalition rehearsed the operation. In Operation Mountain Thrust in June, the ANA participated. In the recent Operation Mountain Fury in September, the ANA ran the briefing and the rehearsal. All agreed that the ANA needed better equipment.

Much of the necessary schooling has been established. There is a Military Academy and those who attend must commit to serving 4-5 years. A six month Officer Candidate School has been established. The French are running a Company Commander course and a Command and Staff course. The British are running basic and advanced NCO courses. In October, a Senior Service College will be established.

MG Durbin oversees both the ANA and Afghan Police. The police present a different set of challenges than the Army. Whereas the Army has been wholly created, the police already existed – so the Coalition has to reform what is already in place. This is difficult because for the past thirty years, the Ministry of Interior, which controls the police, was the dumping ground for bad leadership.

The police were being managed by the Germans, but in 2005, the U.S. Army and the State Department had to take over because of a lack of progress. Now, the U.S. State Department is working through the ranks and vetting individuals for loyalty. The key is to have the police answerable to the central government. This process takes time, but the residents of villages are impatient for security.

One of the biggest issues is rank inflation. The police use the same rank structure as the military. Out of a total 62,000 police, there are 326 officers with the rank of one star or above and 8,000 colonels. Under the first phase of a reform initiative, the number of generals was pared down to 31. Of these, MG Durbin estimates that 25% are truly qualified and loyal. The next phase of reform is to find a police chief for each of the 84 provinces. All agreed that a good governor and a good chief of police were truly transformational.

Corruption is a major issue. The new Attorney General has been in office for two months and he is already frustrated by the corruption. He often pinpoints an official suspected of corruption and then President Karzai's office tells him to not act on the information. The United States has advised the Attorney General to prepare airtight cases against a few officials and then go to President Karzai and have him pick which ones should be pursued.

All the U.S. military leaders and Charge' Norland maintain that President Karzai is personally an honest man. They say that he feels he is balancing a house of cards and he has to be very careful that the wrong person is not brought up on corruption charges because it might be too destabilizing.

President Karzai remains the "indispensable man" with no one waiting in the wings. He is a populist with no factional ties. But LTG Eikenberry admits that President Karzai is having a difficult time. In the beginning there was a process to follow and he had to build a consensus, which was his strength. Now what is needed is statebuilding and this is not President Karzai's forte. He has no experience in running government institutions. Everyone who works in his office is Pashtun and they all recently returned to Afghanistan after a long absence so organizing and running the government is a challenge. LTG Eikenberry does believe, however, that President Karzai is getting stronger. He survived the Kabul riots, fighting in the South, and concern that the transfer of authority to ISAF was a smokescreen for the U.S. departure from Afghanistan. One of LTG Eikenberry's concerns is that President Karzai focuses too much on his base in Kandahar and on the activities of Pakistan, and that because of such a focus, he is losing touch with the rest of Afghanistan.

MG Freakley said that the Pakistani military has expressed willingness to do more on the border. However, since the peace agreement had been signed with North Waziristan, there has been more violence and cross-border tensions. It has been the Coalition's experience that the Pakistanis can be reasoned with in a tense situation. However, the Afghanis consistently see the Pakistanis as the enemy because they get attacked.

Coalition forces are fighting three different groups:

1. Hekmatyar in the East. This group is the most politically connected. It is also the group the U.S. supported during the Soviet invasion. Hekmatyar is not ideologically driven, they are simply seeking power.
2. Haqqini. He was the minister of tribal affairs during the Taliban. He is also not ideologically driven, but is seeking his own territory. He has set up his base in Wazistan. He has the best connections to foreign fighters.
3. The Taliban. Led by Omar, they are now based in Quetta, Pakistan. They are waging a classic insurgency and seek to take over control of Afghanistan once again. The Taliban has heavier weapons this year and their fighting techniques have become more sophisticated.

More than any time in the past, these three groups have cooperated with Al Qaeda this year.

The military leaders at the lunch also expressed concern about the presence of refugee camps in the FATA. The Coalition estimates that one camp has 27,000 inhabitants, 15,000 of whom are men of fighting age.

LTG Eikenberry remains optimistic that we can win the fight in Afghanistan, but he notes it will take “more time, casualties and national treasure.” He notes that in 2001, ninety percent of Afghanistan was under the control of the Taliban and that sanctuary is now gone. However, the Taliban’s command and control and training have moved into Pakistan. Like so many others, LTG Eikenberry noted that Pakistan has not satisfactorily addressed the issue of the Taliban in their country, but it is unclear whether it is a lack of will or ability.

LTG Eikenberry plans on fighting through the winter but he also expects that next spring will bring the toughest fighting to date. He thinks there will be an increase in suicide bombers and Improvised Explosive Devices (IED). These fighters are receiving funding from the drug trade, Pakistani businessmen, and individuals in Saudi Arabia. LTG Eikenberry has been surprised by the boldness and tenacity of the fighters. He believes it is the accumulated effect of four factors: sanctuary in Pakistan which has allowed their command and control to improve, weak governance in Afghanistan, insufficient coalition forces, and insufficient reconstruction.

Regarding Iran, LTG Eikenberry stated that the nation has actually been helpful in Afghanistan. Iran is afraid that the narcotics trade will spread to their country and believes it is in their best interests to have a stable Afghanistan. Iran, therefore, has made some positive investments, especially in Herat. Since Iranian President Ahmadinezhad was elected, an increased number of Iranian intelligence agents have moved into Afghanistan. While they are not presently causing trouble, they may be in place to act if there is an altercation between Iran and the United States.

In reviewing Afghanistan’s other neighbors, LTG Eikenberry stated that President Karzai gets along well with President Niyazov of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan is interested in trade, and Tajikistan is interested in cooperating on border control. However, Russia has become decidedly uncooperative in the past year and is trying to cool relations between Afghanistan and its northern neighbors.

On NATO, LTG Eikenberry noted that NATO plans better than they execute. Lieutenant General Richards, the ISAF commander, needs the promised number of troops to be provided – presently he is at 85% capacity. LTG Richards also needs more reconstruction funding. Finally, NATO needs to accelerate the pace of partnering with the ANA, although LTG Eikenberry notes that it also took the Coalition several months to get such partnering underway.

The justice sector is the weakest in the country. The Army’s justice sector, however, is progressing. A Uniform Code of Military Justice and Judge Advocate General Corps have been established and court martials and appeals courts are operating. LTG Eikenberry noted that the Coalition is creating a professional, united Army which will be well ahead of the country and if the politics in Afghanistan disintegrate, there is a danger that several years from now, the Army could be the source of a coup.

Senator Durbin asked about the status of detainees. We were told that Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan has 620 detainees. Some have intelligence value and some are detained because of criminal conduct. The Bagram facility is the main detention facility and it is inspected monthly by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The detainees are treated according to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions, but these detainees do not have prisoner-of-war status.

There are many field detention sites. Once an individual is detained in the field, the military has ten days to deliver them to the Bagram facility. The field detention sites are not inspected by the ICRC. The CIA has its own detention system which the Army has no insight into. Special Operations also have their own detention system which is under the control of CENTCOM.

LTG Eikenberry's major concern is that detainees are unable to have family visits. He stated that many detainees have been in prison for 1-2 years without seeing their family and it is having negative effects. LTG Eikenberry has requested that family visits be allowed, but he has been denied.

The Coalition is building a prison and training Afghanis to take over detention operations and believe that the transfer will take place in March 2007.

Meeting with Professor Mojaddedi, Speaker of the Afghan Senate

Professor Mojaddedi is a well regarded Islamic scholar and one of the most prominent and prolific advocates of an independent Afghanistan since the early 1950s. He served as the first President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan after the fall of the communist regime in 1992. In December 2003, he served as the chairman of the Loya Jirga that approved Afghanistan's new constitution. Now he is the Speaker of the Afghan Senate.

Professor Mojaddedi stated that fighting was not the solution to Afghanistan's problems and they needed to work on reconciliation. He explained a process for when a member of the Taliban contacts authorities and states that he wants to join the side of the government. He is kept in a guest house and questioned for a few days. If the authorities believe he is being truthful about his change of heart and he has not committed any serious crimes, he meets with the media and announces his intentions so everyone knows of his picture and loyalties. Then he is given a letter and allowed to go free. Professor Mojaddedi says the program has been successful.

Professor Mojaddedi stated that the war in Iraq was very different from the war in Afghanistan. In Iraq, Al Qaeda and sectarian differences causes strife. In Afghanistan, there are tribes, but there is a clear national identity that everyone accepts.

He said the greatest challenge going forward would be creating loyal and skillful soldiers, police and lawyers.

He noted that madrassahs needed to add non-religious subjects like math, physics and history.

He said another challenge was increasing the income of the government in order to meet the needs of the people. The greatest potential is in carpets, fruits and vegetables.

Professor Mojaddedi complained that Pakistan was supporting the Taliban.

Briefing by USAID and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USAID's stated mission in Afghanistan is to provide assistance to the country so it becomes a stable and productive state through democratization, sustainable economic growth, agricultural development, infrastructure, rehabilitation, social sector development and the rule of law.

Between FY01 and FY07, USAID Afghanistan has received \$3.5 billion in regularly budgeted funding and \$2.6 billion in supplemental funding for a total of \$6.1 billion. USAID estimates that \$1 billion per year for the next five years could realistically be spent on reconstruction.

As an example of emphasis, in FY06, \$718 million has been distributed in the following manner:

Roads	\$250	35%
Power	67	9
Economic governance	46	6
Democracy/governance	23	3
Education	49	7
Health	51	7
Agriculture	27	4
Alternate Livelihoods	121	17
PRTs	20	3
Support to other agencies	60	8
Program support	4	1

USAID also briefed us on the 23 Afghan Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). The PRT mandate is to extend the legitimacy and reach of the central government throughout the country using diplomacy, development and defense. Between 2002-2005, \$186 million has been used for "quick impact projects."

Staffing of PRTs remains an issue. There are 23 State Department personnel authorized for PRTs but we were not told if all were filled. There are 19 authorized USAID slots, but only 15 are filled. In addition, most of the USAID personnel are contractors – USAID is not creating a future professional corps of workers for this type of activity. There are seven authorized Agriculture slots but only five are filled. Twenty USDA personnel could easily be used in Afghanistan. However, while desperately needed, there

is not a separate funding line for those in the country so the Department of Agriculture must support these detailees out of its existing budget. We were told one story where the Department of Agriculture tried to eliminate the job of one of their employees while he was in Afghanistan, which is not the support that is required.

One project USAID is working on is energy generation. In this area there is no international assistance. Only 6% of Afghanistan's population has electricity. Kabul receives 3-4 hours of electricity a day. The centerpiece of USAID's energy project in the south is renovation of the hydro plant at the Kajakai Dam and Reservoir. In the North, USAID is working on improving transmission of power from Turkmenistan.

The primary focus of the reconstruction campaign in Afghanistan, however, is road construction. As LTG Eikenberry says, "Where the roads end, the Taliban begins." Roads are the key to bringing the government to the people and providing them with basic services, thus winning their hearts and minds.

Afghanistan has the lowest density of roads per square kilometer of all its neighbors. Only 16% of Afghanistan's roads are paved. Most neighboring countries have 80% or more of their roads paved. Most roads are impassable in winter due to snow and flooding. Most bridges and culverts are in poor condition. One colonel told us it can take Coalition soldiers 12 hours to go 60 miles.

USAID and the Army Corps of Engineers are working together with the international community on roads. The national road is the Kabul-Kandahar-Herat highway or "Ring Road." Over 60% of Afghans live within 50 km of the Ring Road, making it critical for trade. Fifty percent of the Ring Road is completed. The EU, Japan, Asian Development Bank, India and Saudi Arabia have joined USAID in undertaking another 40% of the construction. An additional \$176 million is needed to finish the final 10% or 348 km of road. USAID and international donors are also working on regional roads to connect the provinces to the ring road and "farm to market" roads. The Corps of Engineers, using the Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) funds, are focusing on Provincial Roads which will connect the district centers within provinces. \$1.6 billion is needed to complete these roads. In summary, over the next five years, USAID and the Corps of Engineers will need \$2.373 billion to complete Afghanistan's road network.

Another major project is *Afghan First*. LTG Eikenberry began this program in March to encourage giving contracts and jobs to Afghans. The purpose is to provide skills, increase entrepreneurship and provide opportunities for Afghan economic expansion. Services that are being considered for *Afghan First* include food, fuel, water, interpreters, field services, laundry, pest control, billeting, engineering, base camp power, equipment maintenance, provision of flat beds, fuel tankers and heavy equipment.

Afghan First has had several successes. USAID has hired 13,000 locals to work on the roads. Army Material Command has spent \$84 million on local purchases in the past year. The Army is very close to signing a contract to get bottled water from a local company, which will save the U.S. \$40 million a year. The next project is to teach local

Afghans to repair containers so the U.S. no longer has to spend \$3.5 million per year to ship containers out of the country for repair. One challenge facing the Army is that procurement procedures are not flexible enough for such a program. Private contractors such as Kellogg, Brown and Root are also participating in *Afghan First*.

USAID spends 3% on security. Since 2002, USAID has had 111 Afghani workers killed while they were working on roads. USAID has also built 500 health clinics and 500 schools. Five of those schools and seven of the clinics have been destroyed by the Taliban. It was noted that as the local Afghans buy into the projects and see the benefits, the security situation improves.

Dinner with President Karzai

We had the honor of having dinner with President Karzai and members of his cabinet and staff.

Senator Durbin asked about President Karzai's dinner with President Bush and President Musharraf during his recent visit to the United States. President Karzai said that at times the dinner was tense, but it was always polite. President Karzai said that President Musharraf expressed concern about the Pashtun in Pakistan working with Pashtun in Afghanistan. President Karzai says he does not doubt President Musharraf's intentions, but he does question his abilities.

Senator Reed asked about intelligence sharing between the two countries and President Karzai stated that it is not good, all one sided. He said that when Afghanistan would ask for information about suicide bombers and their trainers, Pakistan would find and kill the informers rather than the terrorists. But President Karzai assured us he would continue to seek cooperation.

President Karzai is very interested in holding an open meeting with Afghani and Pakistani civil society to discuss ways to exchange information and deny sanctuary to terrorists. He would like to find mechanisms that would compel both sides to cooperate. One meeting would take place in Afghanistan and another meeting in Pakistan. He would like the international community to be there to monitor.

President Karzai announced that the previous day he had appointed thirty new judges for the provinces. This led to a discussion of the difficulty of finding individuals trained in civil law and Islamic law. Filling position is easier in the cities but very few want to go out into the country. In small villages, usually the cleric is the judge. Another problem has been pay – judges in the countryside were originally getting \$60 per month but now that has been raised to \$1,500 per month, largely solving the pay problem, and hopefully the recruitment and corruption problems.

The Minister of Defense, who was also at the dinner, stated that the Army is doing well and deserves to be modernized. He would like to improve firepower and air mobility. He is interested in obtaining artillery that is interoperable with NATO, fixed wing

transport, gunships, and ground support. He and President Karzai would also like to see the ANA increased by 17,000 soldiers. The Minister of Defense stated the goal is for the ANA to be able to independently defend Afghan territory from enemies. President Karzai added that another goal was to be a good ally to the United States.

Briefing at Ghazni

On the morning of our second day in Afghanistan, we flew to Ghazni to receive briefings about military operations and the efforts of the PRTs in Regional Command East.

Regional Command East covers ten provinces or 27,000 square miles which is about the size of Georgia. This area has a 569 mile border with Pakistan. The climate in the South is hot and dry while in the North it is cold and there is heavy snow. Like much of the rest of Afghanistan, there is minimal infrastructure and a terrible road network.

The population in Regional Command East is 4,593,000. There are ten major tribes, all Pashtun: Andar, Wardaki, Khugiani, Mangal, Zadran, Waziri, Suliman, Shinwan, Safi, Nuistani and Yajik. There are also hundreds of smaller tribes. The Pashtun have their own code of conduct which equates to a legal system and their own way of dealing with each other.

There are 5,500 US forces and 11,000 Afghan forces in Regional Command East. The U.S. has imbedded training teams down to the company level. The CIA and Special Operations are also operating in the area.

Regional Command East has seen an increase in fighting but said that may be because Regional Command East has become increasingly aggressive -- going into sanctuaries and increasing their presence along the Pakistan border. Coalition forces have been meeting with the Pakistanis to tell them what the campaign plans are.

The center of gravity of the fight is the people. The Coalition's goal is to find out what the insurgency offers and eliminate it. The focus is on providing security, economic development, governance and justice. The Coalition's counterinsurgency model is to first separate the enemy from the people by killing the enemy, driving them out or converting them. The second step is to make the populace feel secure and connected to a government which meets their needs by supplying reconstruction money. The hope is that these steps will transform the loyalty of the populace so that the enemy will not be welcome.

LTG Eikenberry believes the state is slowly being built up and becoming stronger. Ultimately, the state will provide some basic services but it will be a complement to the tribes who will maintain the governing role. Local priorities for reconstruction are security, roads, schools, wells and irrigation.

There does seem to be some evidence of success. Regional Command East estimates that 80% of the population supports the government in response to the terror tactics of the enemy. The Command found that information from the residents was slow when the

Coalition first moved into a district but then increases as trust was established. The U.S./ANA influence with tribal leaders and mullahs varies by tribe, but all are being engaged.

Regional Command East is fighting three fights:

- Indigeneous insurgents from the local area who target the ANA and U.S. forces, but refrain from attacking the local population;
- Insurgents who cross the border from Pakistan and conduct operations; and
- Former Taliban elements. The Taliban in the South have developed a more grassroots campaign. The area is more sparsely populated and isolated from the central government. The Taliban moved in from Pakistan. Regional Command East believes the support of the population is coerced.

PRT Ghazni's mission is to conduct civil-military operations in Ghazni and Wardak Provinces in order to extend the reach and legitimacy of the Afghan government by:

- Providing good governance and justice;
- Enabling an effective Afghan security apparatus through training and mentorships; and
- Focusing on facility reconstruction and economic growth.

The PRT ultimately want to create the conditions for self sufficiency, enduring prosperity and a secure and stable environment in the province.

The PRT is working in an area with very little infrastructure and a weak private sector. The national banking system only works for the wealthy. Microfinancing exists, but the USAID representative did not believe it would be enough to jumpstart the economy. The program is concentrating on rug weaving and fruit processing. Projects for women have to be able to be done from home because most women cannot go out without a male companion.

A myriad of other issues face the PRTs including inadequate human capital due to poor education. There are no girls in schools due to Taliban influence. Low-level malnutrition stunts children and worms are a big problem. The World Food Program is in the country and helped with the drought but withdrew from the school lunch program because of corruption – food was being sold. Health clinics have a desperate need for medicine and additional female staff.

The Afghan police are years from full capacity. In Regional Command East, Coalition forces found that the police were the enemy. The locals would state, "The police steal from us and harass us. The Taliban just want food." One major problem with the poor opinion of the police is that they are the only visible sign of the national government in

this region. To address the problem, a new force has been established and there are efforts to distribute police pay through the banks to minimize corruption.

The Afghan police complain that they lack vehicles and radios and only have AK-47s while the enemy has sophisticated weapons like rocket launchers. The police would like assistance with logistics, equipment, and munitions.

Visit to Ghazni Provincial Coordination Center

The Provincial Coordination Center opened nine months ago. Its mission is to coordinate communication between Afghans and the Coalition on day-to-day operations. It is a combination of ANA, Afghan police and coalition forces. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The main communication is cell phones. The Center is notified of any attack even in the furthest province and even in the middle of the night.

General Eikenberry stated that the Center can be successful because it is not necessary to beat the enemy everywhere. Deterrence matters. Police reaction time goes into the enemy's calculation and at some point, it won't be worth it.

Meeting with the Governor of Ghazni Province, Asadullah Khalid

Governor Khalid met us at the Provincial Coordination Center and we then went to his office for a meeting. He began the meeting by stating his appreciation of the work of the U.S. military and the PRT.

He expressed his concern about lack of cooperation from Pakistan. He stated, "If we have to fight Taliban alone it will take many years. If Pakistan helps, it will go more quickly."

The Governor also discussed the drug problem. He stated, "Where there is no police or roads, there are poppies." He noted that Islam forbids the growing of poppies but the people are poor and so they have no alternative. He also discussed how the Coalition had changed tactics in the counternarcotics fight. Initially, the focus was on destroying the poppy fields but it was dangerous and ineffective because it was done by hand. Now, the focus is to prevent people from planting the poppies in the first place, which the Governor hopes will be more effective.

IRAQ

Meeting with Major General Zilmer, Commanding General, Multinational Forces-West, Al Taqqadum near Fallujah. Briefing on Iraqi Security Forces and Military Transition Teams (MITTs)

Our first stop in Iraq on October 7, 2006 was the headquarters of the Multinational Forces-West at Al Taqqadum near Fallujah in Al Anbar Province. These forces are commanded by Major General Rick Zilmer, USMC.

Al Anbar Province is the epicenter of the Sunni insurgency and one of the most violent areas in Iraq. The Marines and Army forces continue to conduct active campaigns particularly in and around Ramadi. The presence of American forces significantly reduces insurgent activity, but the lasting effect of these operations is uncertain as the insurgents have demonstrated the ability to reconstitute their forces and sustain their operations.

MG Zilmer pointed out that the most recent significant political development is the coming together of tribal chiefs in the Province with the avowed purpose of driving out the foreign Al Qaeda elements in Iraq. This process could be stymied as it has been in the past, but it is the largest effort to date by the Sunni leaders to confront and eject Al Qaeda (Last year, when a similar effort began, Al Qaeda conducted a campaign of assassination that intimidated the local leaders and disrupted the Sunni attempts to confront Al Qaeda). Although the Sunni leadership is attempting to confront Al Qaeda, these efforts have not translated into robust information sharing with Coalition forces. MG Zilmer is hopeful that such sharing may evolve.

One of the political factors that complicate the situation in Al Anbar Province is the fact that the Governor does not wield much influence in Baghdad because he is a Sunni. Moreover, many of the tribal leaders also resent him.

The local Sunni leaders in Al Anbar want financial support and weapons from the Coalition. This support is not forthcoming, but the Marines are trying to arrange an accommodation so that Sunni tribes can police their neighborhoods when the Marines are not present (The presence of armed Sunni tribesmen raises concerns with the Shia leadership in Baghdad that these forces are another aspect of the militia problem. However, MG Zilmer stressed that they should not be considered in that way).

MG Zilmer described a tactical situation where violence is increasing, but Coalition forces continue to have access throughout the Province, provided they have adequate security. Ramadan saw an increase in suicide bombings. These bombers include native Iraqis as well as foreigners. The major menace in the Province is the Improvised Explosive Device (IED). Because Coalition forces have successfully employed jammers to disrupt the remote detonation of these IEDs, the insurgents have adapted and now often use pressure plates or command detonation by an individual. Actual engagements by the insurgents are limited to long-range fires. The insurgents are not interested in seizing terrain. They are operating to inflict casualties and undermine stability.

MG Zilmer commented on the status of his Marines. He noted that retention rates are good, but he cautioned that the operational tempo will eventually catch up and these rates cannot be expected to endure indefinitely. The quality of the force, both active and reserve Marines, remains excellent. He has not yet observed a diminution in the quality of the forces under his command. There is always the fear that the cumulative pressures of battle will lead to incidents like "Haditha" (By the way, he noted that the Marines

involved in that incident were on their first tours). He intends to keep close watch on morale and any tendency to weaken the expected standards of conduct.

MG Zilmer spoke about the ongoing operations in Ramadi. Ramadi is a major city in the Province and, until recently, under the sway of insurgent forces. The usual approach to reduce the insurgents and reclaim a city involves encirclement and then a deliberate clearing operation. However, because troops were moved from Al Anbar to Baghdad to conduct the ongoing Operation Forward Together, insufficient troops are available for this type of operation. As such, Coalition forces are using a “more subtle approach.” They are blocking major arteries into the city and then pushing forward with combat outposts in the city. It is presently a combined United States/Iraq operation, but MG Zilmer hopes to hand over to the Iraqi police at the first opportunity.

This line of discussion led to the question whether the operations in Al Anbar are now “economy of force” operations meant to fix the enemy with minimal forces, rather than destroy the enemy, while the main effort is elsewhere (in this case, Baghdad). MG Zilmer would not describe his operations as strictly “economy of force,” but he made the point that “if we lose Baghdad, it doesn’t matter what we are doing out here. It will be rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.” In response to a direct question about increasing the Coalition presence in Al Anbar, MG Zilmer stressed that we can destroy insurgents “till the cows come home,” but that will not solve the problem. Coalition strategy has to put the Iraqis in the lead and invest in governmental capacity and economic reconstruction. That is “what is going to turn the tide.”

The discussion turned to the Iraqi Army in Al Anbar. MG Zilmer indicated that the authorized size has remained fairly constant. Actual numbers have increased in the preceding weeks with the return of 1,700 “missing soldiers.” There are rumors that more will return. Their return was prompted by evidence that quality of life issues, like pay and food, were beginning to improve. The hope is that the Iraqis can sustain these actual numbers as logistical and administrative support becomes more dependable. Enlistment requirements include literacy and having at least 22 teeth. The literacy requirement, in particular, makes it hard to recruit in Al Anbar and inadequate local recruiting means that the force is not fully representative of the local Sunni population.

Al Anbar is the home of the 1st Iraqi Division. It is the most mature division in the new Iraqi Army. It was organized 18 months ago on a national basis. 70% of the enlisted are Shia. The majority of the officers (about 70%) are Sunni. There is also a small number of Kurds. Approximately 45% of the troops had prior service in the old Iraqi Army. As a rule of thumb, individuals under the rank of Major in the old Iraqi Army will be accepted into the new Iraqi Army. The Division is composed of 10,000 soldiers organized into 4 brigades and 12 subordinate battalions.

To train this formation, the United States has committed a Military Transition Team (MITT) composed of 50 personnel. They are located in each brigade and battalion headquarters and in specialty areas of the division like supply and intelligence. There are

also advisors at the company level who go where the Iraqi troops go. They provide advice and conduct periodic evaluations of the progress of the units.

The Marine MITTs do tours of seven months. There is some pressure to lengthen the tours to 12 months to enhance continuity and avoid the disruption of frequent changes in advisors. MG Zilmer thought that the seven month tours resulted in high energy and enthusiastic performance, but he also recognized that the shorter tour more quickly upset the trust and personal relationships that are critical to building rapport and expertise in the Iraqi Army.

When the MITT arrived in January, the 1st Division did not independently control any battle space. Now, the Division controls some battle space, and, by next March, Iraqi leaders are projected to assume command responsibilities in a wide area of the Province. In addition, last January, none of the brigades was under the control of the Division Commander. Today, he controls the 3rd and 4th Brigades with the 2nd Brigade scheduled to come under his command in November or December. Last January, Marines or United States Army personnel escorted the Iraqis on every convoy. Today, their communications, medical support, and tactical movement skills allow the Iraqis to conduct convoys on their own. Similarly, Iraqi engineering units have begun to assume the responsibility for building fortifications and control points that was previously solely within the capability of Coalition forces.

The main problem with the Division remains corruption. There used to be 1,600 “ghost soldiers,” on the rolls but none represented real soldiers. Now, that figure has been reduced to approximately 900. But, that is still an unacceptable figure. There are also some sectarian influences within the Division, but they are not obvious at this point. Since Al Anbar is an overwhelmingly Sunni community it is not the site of sectarian conflict like Baghdad. But, if the Shia dominated national government establishes a more explicit presence in the Province, a counter-reaction could take place.

Tour and Briefing with 1st Iraqi Army Division, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade MITT, Outpost Dunlap

We crossed the Euphrates River by raft to visit Outpost Dunlap and elements of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade of the 1st Iraqi Army Division along with their MITT advisors.

The 2nd Battalion crossed the Euphrates in August of 2005 to stop insurgents from shelling civilians on the other side of the river. The Battalion was part of the security for the elections and was pleased that 90% of the residents voted. To build goodwill with civilians, members of the battalion visit schools and provide school and medical supplies. They also meet with the sheiks and see if they can help with any problems. One result is that an increasing amount of information is coming from civilians – the majority of the IEDs are now found because of tips from civilians.

When we visited, the 2nd battalion had been at 50% strength. However, with an influx of 685 soldiers of the 1,700 who returned, the battalion’s strength was climbing to 85%.

American commanders believe that the 1,700 Iraqi soldiers left not because of the danger but because of poor leadership and the fact they were not getting paid. Another reason soldiers left was to relocate their families either because of sectarian violence or to move them closer to where the soldier was stationed. These 1,700 soldiers returned because they needed the money and they heard the conditions had improved. The returning 1,700 will receive a refresher course.

90% of the patrols are led by officers because that is a traditional Iraqi method. However, they are working on increasing the use of NCOs and in the past week three patrols had been lead by NCOs.

The Marines requested additional riverine assets since insurgents often traveled by boat on the Euphrates.

Meeting with Lieutenant General Dempsey, Commanding General, Multi-National Security Transition Command, Baghdad, Iraq

LTG Dempsey is in charge of both the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police. At the present time, there are 137,000 soldiers and 182,000 police. The goal is a total force of 360,000 by next July.

Prime Minister Maliki has established an army growth initiative. He doesn't trust the police so he wants 50,000 more soldiers. To begin this growth, the Prime Minister proposed to pay \$800 million to recruit and train 18,796 more soldiers. The annual cost of maintaining these soldiers will be \$200 million. In addition there is a need to replenish the Army which is losing approximately 1,000 soldiers per month. Recruiting has been handed over to Iraqis who say they will not lower recruiting standards. Because the growth is modest and the Iraqis are willing to pay, LTG Dempsey supports the growth initiative.

LTG Dempsey was also very pleased with the news that approximately 1,700 soldiers who have left over the past six months have now come back. When asked about their loyalty, General Dempsey said the goal was to get the issues of pay and life support resolved so that there could be a true test of loyalty. Another issue that needs working on is that soldiers in other areas refuse to be deployed in Baghdad.

Major General Lloyd Austin, Chief of Staff, Central Command, had done a review and found that the Iraqi Army was progressing well. He advised additional MITT teams. General Dempsey has three options for staffing MITTS – they can be activated to be MITTs, MITTs can be formed from forces originally tasked with a different mission or there can be individual augmentees. Many of the soldiers for MITTS were Army reserve. While some Marines had expressed some concerns about the reservists, LTG Dempsey stated he found their civilian expertise very useful in MITT teams and in ministry advising. He also noted that a MITT center of excellence had been established at Fort Riley.

On the status of the Iraqi Army, LTG Dempsey stated he has seen some progress and some backsliding. He believes the Minister of Defense has cleaned house. He sees progress in ability and willingness to fight. One year ago the Iraqi Army's first instinct was to call on the U.S. to solve any problem, but now they solve many problems by themselves. There is also more transparency with new ministries. However, LTG Dempsey sees backsliding in fiscal management and ability to spend money. For example, the Iraqi government contracted for life support the first six months of the year for \$10.50 per soldier. The contractor would then subcontract it for \$8.00 and that subcontractor would subcontract it again for \$6.00. Therefore the soldiers would get much poorer life support than the government paid for. This type of corruption is improving but not exponentially.

Senator Reed asked how we would know if the ministries were being effective and LTG Dempsey said a key test would be Iraq's response to two Foreign Military Sales proposed by the United States. If the Iraqis are willing to invest in their Army with the U.S. as an executive agent, then there is evidence the ministries are working. If the Ministry is not willing then that will be an indication that Iraqis do not want the Ministry of Defense to succeed or they are holding onto money for other reasons, such as a coup.

LTG Dempsey believes the Minister of the Interior Jawad al-Bolani is the best man who has been in the position. LTG Dempsey believes he is honest and committed but inexperienced for the job. He also has the problem that his deputy is a holdover. He needs to change out about five individuals in order to truly have his own ministry.

LTG Dempsey believes that in most places, the local police are net contributors to security. The major exception is Al Anbar province. The police in Baghdad have a reputation for being corrupt, but police in the rest of the country are good enough.

The major issue with the National Police is that they were not newly created. Former interim Prime Minister Allawi grew them for the elections and it was not done well. In order to change the police, LTG Dempsey is proposing a four phase reform: assess the leadership and purge the ranks, develop the remaining leadership, retrain the rest of the ranks, and move approximately half of the police force outside of Baghdad. LTG Dempsey has also increased the police MITTS so that there is one in every police station in Baghdad.

On the Prime Minister's reconciliation effort, LTG Dempsey said that even after three years of deployment in Iraq, he underestimates how much the Shia felt oppressed and did not want to be out of power again. LTG Dempsey says people's view of reconciliation depends on their view of Prime Minister Maliki. Some think he is committed to unity, some think he is consolidating Shia power. Some think he prevents the U.S. from going into Shia areas to help reconciliation and lower violence, others think he is building Shia havens for the future.

Another concern is that the Minister of Health is a member of Sadr's organization and is working to ensure Prime Minister Maliki doesn't succeed.

LTG Dempsey remains optimistic that things are improving in Iraq. He stated that with a permanent government now in place, 2006 has been a building year. He sees 2007 as a sustainment year and by the end of 2007, he thinks U.S. forces should be in the background. He stated that as the Iraqis show increasing responsibility, the U.S. needs to get out of the way and reduce numbers.

Meeting with Major General William Caldwell, Deputy Chief of Staff, for Strategic Effects, Baghdad, Iraq

We met with Major General Caldwell and spoke extensively about reconciliation and the sectarian violence.

MG Caldwell was concerned about how serious Prime Minister Maliki is about reconciliation. At the time we spoke with him, the U.S. did not have any more details of Prime Minister Maliki's reconciliation plan than the single page that was presented to the press. U.S. commanders and officials were also surprised by the announcement of the plan – they were not apprised of or included in any discussions. MG Caldwell also stated that he and his staff provided Prime Minister Maliki with talking points to help on the issue of reconciliation, but the Prime Minister was ignoring all suggestions.

MG Caldwell was concerned that there was no talk of bringing the Sunnis into the government. He was also concerned that there simply wasn't the capacity to demobilize all the militias, provide vocational training, and absorb individuals into the Iraqi Army or civilian society. MG Caldwell estimated that only about 5,000 of the Badr corps could be absorbed into the Iraqi Army.

MG Caldwell was also concerned about the sectarian violence and that Iraqi leaders did not condemn all sectarian activities. He noted that the number of deaths and attacks had continued to climb and was the result of sectarian violence, not Al Qaeda (except for Al Anbar province). He stated that he was surprised at the level of violence and the brutality of the deaths given the fact that out of a population of 27 million persons, 4 million have mixed Sunni-Shia marriages. MG Caldwell stated that in reality, Coalition forces cannot resolve the sectarian violence. Coalition forces can just set conditions and the Iraqi government had to address the problem.

MG Caldwell also stated that Coalition forces were not getting any assistance from the Iraqis on intelligence matters.

Meeting with Lieutenant General Chiarelli, Commanding General, Multi-National Corps, Baghdad, Iraq

We then had the opportunity to meet with LTG Chiarelli. He began our meeting by showing a map of cleared areas in Baghdad. The discussion turned to the fact that the Iraqi government has not granted the U.S. permission to clear Sadr City. However, the area adjacent to Sadr City, which has the same demographics – mostly Shia, 70%

unemployment and no electricity – has been successfully cleared. In cleared areas, attacks are down to three a day.

LTG Chiarelli also expressed deep disappointment at the change in the neighborhood of Adimiya, a Sunni area. He explained that a year ago it was a “diamond in the rough,” full of professionals with nice homes. Now, the area does not have electricity because the transformers are shot out, the banks are shut down and there is no trash pick-up. As a result, there is high discontent and people are leaving the country. LTG Chiarelli stated that while he used to be opposed to giving neighborhoods generators because they were a temporary fix, he is now doing it because he does not see 24/7 electricity as a possibility for quite a while. Senator Durbin asked why it was so difficult to supply electricity and LTG Chiarelli stated there were several reasons:

- Iraqis do not have a system or plan to perform scheduled and unscheduled maintenance.
- Transformers run by gas turbines and there is not enough quality gas.
- There are attacks on the system.
- The U.S. did not initially understand how terrible the distribution system was.

The United Nations estimates that the reconstruction of Iraq infrastructure will cost \$60 billion. Presently there are no international donors for this effort. The U.S. provided \$18 billion through the Iraqi Reconstruction Fund, but \$8 billion was used for security, \$2 billion was used for fuel and therefore \$8 billion remained for actual reconstruction. This funding has been spent but did not accomplish even a small amount of what needed to be done and there is evidence a great deal of it was misused by contractors. LTG Chiarelli also noted that Iraq had money in the bank from oil revenues, but there is no contracting ability to ensure the oil revenues are used to meet the residents’ needs.

LTG Chiarelli stated that Saddam Hussein handled the running of the country in two ways – power and corruption. Corruption was and is part of the system. Thirty-five years of not having a bureaucracy can’t be redone overnight.

In the areas where the U.S. is “involved hands on,” there is success. LTG Chiarelli made the spraying of the Iraqi date crop a priority because of its importance to the Iraqis and their economy. Once a U.S. contract to spray was put in place, this year’s date crop is one of the best ever.

LTG Chiarelli stated one his biggest regrets was not using local contractors for projects. He said if you ask the governor of Baghdad, “how can we lower terrorism?” he would answer, “Get angry young man off the street.” LTG Chiarelli noted that unemployment is so high that if it drops from 60% to 40% in an area, the residents are much more satisfied.

LTG Chiarelli expressed a level of frustration regarding the Iraqi government’s support of their Army. The U.S. equipped and trained the Iraqi Army, picked its leaders, and embedded with it. Sixty percent of the beds in U.S. hospitals are for Iraqis and the U.S.

provides the Iraqi Army with fuel. Because the U.S. takes care of the Iraqis, the soldiers fight for them. But now the Minister of Defense is falling short. As LTG Chiarelli said, “If the Iraqi government does not provide food, hospitals, or pay, what is the use?”

LTG Chiarelli also stated that the Minister of Health is controlled by Sadr and has not done anything to date to be helpful to Iraqi citizens.

Meeting with Baghdad PRT

On the morning of our second day in Iraq, we met with the military and civilians who are members of the Baghdad PRT.

They began their briefing with an overview of the Baghdad province. The population is 7 million, 5 million of which live in nine city districts, while 2 million live in six qadas, or districts, outside the city. The breakdown of the population is 65% Shia, 30% Sunni, and 5% other. General unemployment in Baghdad, not analyzed by neighborhood, is 20-40%. Some of the potential economic opportunities for the Baghdad population include oil refining, engineering, construction, food and medicine production and agriculture.

The City of Baghdad has 89 official neighborhoods within 9 districts or qadas. Each neighborhood now has a council made up of elected members. These neighborhood councils elected representatives to service on one of the nine district councils. The nine district councils then elected representatives from their membership to serve on the 37 member Baghdad City Council. Outside of the city of Baghdad, but in Baghdad Province, there are twenty neighborhoods. They also elected local councils, who then elected representatives to serve on six district councils. The six district councils then elected representatives from among their members to serve on the 35 member Baghdad Regional Council. The 41 member Baghdad Provincial Council was then elected by their peers from the lower councils in numbers proportional to the population of the districts they represent

Baghdad’s mayor is responsible for water, sewer, solid waste inside city, while electricity, schools and services in the qadas is maintained by the ministries. The Provincial Council has subcommittees focusing on agriculture, civil society, economics, education, essential services, health and enforcement, human/women’s rights, integrity, legal, media/public relations, reconstruction, religious affairs, security, youth/sports, energy, and strategic vision. The Baghdad PRT is working with the Council on these committees.

The chairman of the Baghdad Provincial Council is from the Supreme Council of Islamic Revolution in Iraq or SCIRI party, the Governor is a member of Badr Corps (the armed wing of SCIRI) and the Mayor of Baghdad is SCIRI, all Shia. The chairman is elected, the other two appointed. No corruption has been traced back to these three individuals specifically. There is sectarian violence, but the provincial council chairman speaks of reconciliation and the mayor’s office has remained neutral.

One major concern is that the provincial council does not represent the city makeup – the Sunnis are not represented because they did not participate in the elections. The solution to this problem is to hold new provincial elections but the process is complicated, and includes the passage of at least one new law. Holding provincial elections would be a key indicator of whether the Shia-dominated government was serious about reconciliation.

This PRT is staffed at 69-70 people. A full PRT has 80-120 personnel. However, it has more personnel than any other PRT. The makeup of the Baghdad PRT is 7 State Department personnel, 36 Defense Department personnel, 1 person from the Department of Justice, 1 person from SAID, 1 International Narcotics and Law Enforcement officer, 6 DOD contractor bilingual and bicultural advisors, 3 USAID contractors for local governance program, 1 USAID contractor for community stabilization, and 12 locally employed staff. The normal tour for PRT personnel is one year. The team performs approximately 20 missions per week and moves in the red zone.

Ministerial mentoring is separate from the PRTs but they coordinate. A major problem in the ministries is that there is no pool of staff for the new ministries. The PRT is trying to develop a professional civil servant corps.

Despite their small size and understaffing, the Baghdad PRT has ambitious goals. Their mission statement is: to develop a transparent and sustained capability to govern; promote enhanced security and rule of law; promote political and economic development; provide services meeting the basic needs of the population; and earn the trust and confidence of all the provincial citizens. The PRT ultimately would like to have a provincial government that is confident of its abilities to fulfill its duties; has an easily understood and transparent process for identifying and addressing the needs of its population; reflects professional core competencies in public administration, finance, budgeting, and urban planning; delivers basic services efficiently and equitably; completes and reports on self assessments of political, economic and strategic activities; is widely supported and trusted by province's residents; and advocates for national Iraqi policy goals. All of this was supposed to be accomplished by the December 2007 when the PRTs were supposed to end, but now the PRTs have been extended a year and now will end in December 2008.

Several members of the PRT were present at the meeting and each spoke briefly about their daily tasks. A State Department foreign service officer manages the governance section. He investigates where there is a disconnect among local/provincial/national governments and reports back to embassy. The Public Affairs/Diplomacy officer engages with the local administration and media to communicate vision and give the population some confidence. He works on spreading the news of progress. USAID manages local governance programs and coordinates between USAID and CERP programs. The Rule of Law section has three attorneys and four military personnel who work on human rights, women's rights, and legal aid.

The PRT members then discussed some of the issues they were facing. Problems with security loomed large. Militias have heavily infiltrated the police and low salaries and low morale make recruiting and retention difficult. PRT members estimated that over 2,000 police have been killed in the past two years so the police are afraid to do their job. The same problem plagues the justice system – people are afraid to go to court because so many judges are assassinated.

Security and lack of ministerial capacity continues to hinder supply of city services. For example, on March 1, trash pick up was transferred to Iraqis. They did well for a while but then progress stopped because the Iraqi government was not supplying funding and workers would not go into some areas because of security. The Baghdad PRT members joined the chorus of complaints about the Health Ministry.

The PRT leader also discussed Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committees (PRDC) which enable provincial Iraqi leaders to have a greater voice in how U.S. and other funds are used in their provinces and to improve coordination between the provinces and the national government. PRDC funding includes a combination of CERP funds, USAID-administered Community Action Program (CAP) and USAID Local Governance Program (LGP) funds. For the past 18 months, Iraqis and the U.S. have worked together to choose projects. In the beginning, the U.S. decided on projects without consultation and found out that the Iraqis often had plans on the shelf for a project and just were never able to do it. The PRT members said they were pleasantly surprised that the choices of projects were balanced across neighborhoods.

The PRT is working with the Iraqis on planning and contracting. During the Hussein regime, the Iraqis were just told they were getting a project. Now they have to work it out for themselves. The PRT is also trying to teach the Iraqis to make accommodations for unscheduled maintenance, a problem also noted by LTG Chiarelli. As one PRT member explained the problem, “Everyone knows some transformers will be lost to sabotage, so you plan for it. Right now, the Iraqis do not.”

Meeting with Iraq Minister of Interior His Excellency Jawad al-Bolani

We met with Iraqi Minister of the Interior Jawad al-Bolani. U.S. Ambassador Khalizad also joined us for this meeting.

Minister Bolani stated that security and reconstruction were his top priorities. He noted that some areas of Iraq had the security situation under control and that sovereignty was being transferred to the Iraqis, but other areas presented challenges for the government and coalition forces. He spoke of Fallujah as a success story. He said that it used to be completely in the hands of insurgents. But he recently visited the city and found life in the city and factories. He also said that the police meet with city officials daily for new developments in security.

Minister Bolani stated he was working to develop the police as a professional institution, free from corruption and sectarianism. Many police have been relieved of their duties

because of financial corruption, mismanagement, and misuse of authority. He said, “We have no option but to rebuild and continue.”

When Senator Reed asked what steps he was taking to eliminate sectarian differences, Minister Bolani said the key was leadership. He stated that in the past, if there was misuse of authority, nothing was done. Now there is punishment waiting. There is a message from the highest to lowest levels that sectarianism is being watched and followed. He said that his ministry has established a specific training plan. An officer has to take oath an before the Iraqi flag. He must realize he is charged with performing a public service for *all* Iraqis. There is no one above the law. Institutions cannot side with any particular religion or sect. The purpose of national reconciliation is to create acceptance for a national government.

Senator Reed then asked if Iraq would ever be secure without bringing the militias under control. Minister Bolani agreed that the militias lead the insurgency and are very dangerous. He stated that there are two types: those who exist because the CPA did not properly vet the police, and those who have appeared because of the growth of sectarian violence. The Minister stated they could be dealt with either by the Ministry of Defense or politically, with reconciliation and reconstruction creating a partnership between security personnel and the citizens.

Senator Durbin asked if Iraq was engulfed in a civil war. Minister Bolani replied that “The prerequisites for a civil war are not there despite the things that have happened in some areas.” He stated that suicide bombers are used to horrify people and he laid the blame on Al Qaeda.

Senator Reed then asked how long the country could withstand the present level of violence. Minister Bolani said he did not have an accurate answer. He noted the level of violence goes up and down from one area to another. Areas that have al Qaeda and Mahdi Army have great violence and innocent people pay the price. The Minister stated that coalition forces and the Iraqi Army were changing that, but that it will take time. He also stated that the justice sector had to be responsible and enforce the law, but in many areas that was not possible because the judges were threatened by terrorists. Again, the Minister said the Iraqis and multinational forces are changing this but this matter will require some time.

Senator Reed noted that many positive steps have been taken but that there was concern that the situation was not improving fast enough and that time may be running out. Minister Bolani replied that the Iraqi people are not accustomed to this new democracy. Iraqis have to face the fact that the building of institutions takes time. He noted that the Prime Minister is a brave and cautious man and is not worried.

***Forward Operating Base Speicher, Tikrit, Iraq
Campaign Brief and Threat Assessment, Multi-National Division-North, Task Force
Lightning***

We then flew to Tikrit and received a briefing by the 25th Infantry Division and Task Force Lightning, commanded by Major General Benjamin Mixon.

The briefing began with an overview of the area covered by Multi-National Division North (MND-N). MND-N controls four provinces in an area about the size of Pennsylvania. Ninevah Province has a 230 mile border with Syria and the area also borders Iran. The two major cities are Mosul and Tikrit. The total population is 11.3 million which is broken down into 50% Kurds, 29% Sunni and 15% Shia. The entire Kurdish area is in MND-N.

Kirkuk has 40% of all Iraq's oil reserves. As the constitution is presently written, Article 140 states that a referendum on whether Kirkuk and other areas become autonomous will take place in December 2007.

In the Salidan Province, the city of Bayji has oil refineries and power plants that could supply 50% of electricity to Baghdad

The nature of attacks by Al Qaeda has changed. First, the target was coalition forces, then it was Iraqi security forces, now it is civilians. The major form of attacks is IEDs. MND-N stated that even though many Al Qaeda leaders have been caught, the insurgency can sustain the present level of violence for foreseeable future.

MG Mixon noted two disturbing developments. First, Sadr has lost control of some of the more radical elements of his Mahdi Army or Jaish al Mahdi (JAM). Second, the new leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, may be more effective than al-Zarqawi and has Sunni contacts. He believes Al Qaeda is helping foment the Sunni-Shia divide.

MND-N works with the Iraqi Army's 4th Division under control of General Aziz. The Iraqis have control of most of the battlespace in MND-N. General Aziz troops also guard the strategic infrastructure – but his troops are Army, not the maligned Force Protection Service forces controlled by the various ministries.

MG Mixon said that the next six months will determine if the U.S. strategy in Iraq is working. He stated the issue as, "Can Iraqi forces, with little coalition help, provide a moderate level of security?" He said that there will simply always be violence, but that violence was acceptable if the ISF remained engaged. He summed up by saying, "If next summer we need to have major forces in the field, we have not succeeded."

Briefing with Salah ad Din PRT

Each of the four provinces in MND-N has a PRT. We received a briefing by one, the Salah ad Din PRT. It had only been stood up on May 15th. The team was not at initial operating capability until September 8th and the team was officially inaugurated the week we visited, the first week of October. MG Mixon expressed his frustration that PRTs were declared a national priority but were still being manned a year later.

Despite its inauguration, the PRT was still understaffed when we visited. The team still needed one economics officer even though they had made repeated requests through DOD, State Department, USAID and contractors. The team leader, when asked, also said she could use three more economic officers and system engineers, one more person to teach rule of law and one or two more agriculture experts. The military civilian affairs experts are working with the municipalities because the PRT simply does not have the capacity.

The goal of the PRT is to change the way residents view the role of government in Iraqi society. The measure of success will be how effective a provincial government in Sunni heartland is in maintaining a constructive dialogue with the Shia-dominated central government to address the needs of the province. Presently, a provincial government structure is in place but it is not functioning effectively nor interacting with Baghdad. The PRT is focusing on five areas: governance, rule of law, economics, infrastructures and focused stabilization of certain areas. The stabilization of Sumarra is one special project and there is \$35 million available for the effort.

Another special focus of the PRT is the city of Bayji. Oil is pumped out of Kirkuk and refined in Bayji. The PRT faces two problems. The first is corruption, but right now corruption protects the infrastructure. The refineries are not being attacked because the insurgents are receiving money. If corruption is addressed, the insurgents may begin to attack the infrastructure.

The second problem is that Bayji and provinces are not benefiting from the oil produced and refined in the area. The PRT leader stated that \$13 billion in oil funds are available but not applied by the Iraqi government to the area. \$2 billion is supposed to be set aside for each province, however, Salah ad Din had only received \$83.3 million to date. One issue, again, was the ability to create and manage a budget and contract for services.

The PRT leader noted that De-Baathification and dissolution of the Army has had a negative impact on this area. It was compounded by the Sunni 2005 boycott of the elections which meant that there were no Sunnis in the government so these provinces have no representation. The PRT leader noted that the Sunnis desperately want new provincial elections so they can begin to participate and start taking control of their future.

Like elsewhere in Iraq, the rule of law remains a huge hurdle. The PRT was working to improve accountability of government officials, improve the legitimacy of the courts,

improve the police force and improve detention centers and prisons. The PRT is working closely with the Police Imbedded Training Teams (PITTs).

Both military leaders and the PRT leader agreed that conscious ethnic cleansing was taking place. Shia are being told to move, threatened, or killed. The PRT leader and MG Mixon believe a credible police force would help the situation.

Meeting with Iraq Security Forces and MITT, Forward Operating Base Dagger, Tikrit

The Iraqi Division is led by Lieutenant General Aziz. General Aziz has been in the Iraqi Army for 36 years. He said that he has “lived his life on watch” because he is a Kurd and refused to become a member of the Baath party.

General Aziz stated that it is not easy to transition to democracy. The Iraqis have lived under fear and oppression for a long time. The major concern is security, which is uncertain because neighbors have sectarian differences and Saddam Hussein made people hate each other. To get back on the right track is going to take time. General Aziz hopes that his children and grandchildren have a better future.

General Aziz discussed the progress of the Army. When Saddam fell, the Iraqis started a new Army. In the beginning, most could not walk down the street in Army uniforms. The U.S. was seen as occupiers and there was an insurgency. Now Iraqis can go to Baghdad and move around in uniform with honor. General Aziz says it is a great advancement but movement is slow.

General Aziz feels that the Minister of Defense is weak. He believes that much of the Army’s personnel served under Hussein and that they are weak of mind and heart and are not qualified. Senator Durbin asked how soon the Iraqi Army would be ready. General Aziz replied, “If you have a sick person and two doctors, one generalist and one specialist, the specialist will fix the problem faster. But right now, we don’t have a specialist as the Minister of Defense. I prefer a leader in a tie, not a turban.”

General Aziz expressed appreciation that MG Mixon had been meeting with tribal leaders and working to understand the culture of the Iraqi people. He believes that Americans made mistakes in this regard in the beginning. For example, the U.S. allowed Sadr to gain power when Iraqis knew he should not be allowed to grow strong. General Aziz personally had an issue with Coalition forces when he wanted to use a Kurdish force to patrol 100 km road in his area, but the Coalition would not allow it. He also said that Army divisions are difficult to move to other areas because of how they have been created by the Americans.

General Aziz said he felt that the Shia were racing to control the government and that was a mistake.

4th Iraqi Army Division Staff Brief

For our final meeting in Iraq, we received a brief by the 4th Iraqi Army Division. It was started by General Aziz's staff, but was taken over by General Aziz.

The 4th Division is responsible for three provinces. Their mission originally was to provide security for roads and people and improve the ability of the division. However, tasks were added to protect the pipeline and products and combat corruption.

General Aziz extensively discussed the corruption surrounding oil production in Baiji. He claimed that millions of dollars are being stolen by "mafia" elements, the Ministry of Oil, contractors and others. General Aziz stated he had a plan to defeat the corruption but it will take time. He requested that the United States and Coalition Forces help him obtain needed authority and equipment such as armored vehicles to man checkpoints to control oil distribution corruption.